BENTLEY UNIVERSITY

Human Resources

Quick Reference Guide
Interview Questions

The candidate interview is a crucial component of the candidate selection process. This Interview Guide includes four sections that are intended to help the interviewer plan for and conduct an interview that gathers the most accurate data possible on which to base the selection decision. This Quick Reference Guide includes:

- Behavior Based Interviewing – Base concepts and techniques associated with this style interview
- Types of Interview Questions – Behavioral vs. Traditional
- Questions – Examples of Differences between Behavioral & Traditional
- Acceptable and Unacceptable Questions – Chart of what topics to avoid

Behavioral Based Interviewing

There are two basic premises of behavior based interviewing:

- *Past job-related behavior predicts future behavior.*
- *Past job-related behavior demonstrates the skills and competencies required to succeed in Bentley's position.*

For this reason:

Defining what you are looking for is key - skills, knowledge, competencies. All candidates should be measured against the same criteria

- Hypothetical or situational questions can be ineffective – stay out of the "woulds" as they do not address past behavior
- Questions should draw out past examples of behavior that include:
    - What was the past Situation or Task?
    - What did the candidate do (Action)?
    - What was the outcome (Result)?

In a Behavioral interview, the candidate's responses should follow this format	Listen for:
Situation or Task Background or context of the action, why it took place	Specific, not general or hypothetical Enough detail without getting bogged down Well organized telling
Action Candidate Took What the candidate has said or done in response to the situation.	Focus on "I", not "we," evidence of self-awareness Candidate's role Effective or positive action

Results Candidate Achieved The effect of the candidate's actions	What happened What was accomplished/learned

Types of Interview Questions

Many different types of questions are used in an interview, from open questions that allow the candidate to say whatever they want, to closed questions that confirm specific information. It is important that the interviewer is familiar with all the different types, and selects those types of questions that will best draw out the most valuable data on which to base the selection decision. All interviews should include some behavioral questions.

Type of Question	Description	Example
Open/Broad	Candidate is expected to provide a full answer to a general question	Tell me about your role at XX College.
Accomplishment	Candidate is given the opportunity to "sell" via sharing of accomplishments	Tell me about the contribution you made to that project.
Self-Analysis/Appraisal	Helps to determine candidate's level of self-awareness	Why were you selected to lead that team? What did you learn about yourself from that experience?
Motivation	Helps to get at what circumstances result in optimum performance on the part of the candidate	What are the most satisfying aspects of your current role? Describe the manager for whom you have done your best work.
Closed	Can lead to a 'yes' or 'no' response, or specific information	What are your salary requirements? Can you work evenings?
Opinion/Philosophy	Helps get at technical or theoretical knowledge, also values and beliefs	What do you think is the most effective process for…
Situational/Hypothetical	Lead candidates to respond to what they would do in a situation	[Given this scenario], how would you respond/act?
Leading – *Avoid*	Provide some of the answers to the candidate	Would you say you have the initiative to drive the results we need?
Behavioral – *Basis of the interview*	Candidate is expected to provide an example that illustrates their past behavior under similar circumstances.	Tell me about a time when you… Give me an example of a time…

Probe/Follow up – *Critical to a good interview*	The "digging" questions that probe for more information to complete the components of the STAR (Situation/Task-Action-Result) format that comprises a complete answer.	How did she respond to that? And then what did you do? And how did it end?

Questions - **Examples of Differences between Behavioral & Traditional**

Traditional Interview	Behavioral Interview
Planning & Organizing	
What do you think is the most critical component of successful project management and why is that?	Tell me about a project you have managed. How did you organize the process?
Communication	
How would you typically prepare for a presentation to a student vs. a staff group?	Describe an opportunity when you have prepared to deliver a presentation to a student group. What did you do specific for this audience?
Initiative	
How would you describe your initiative and ability to work independently?	Tell me about a work situation that demonstrates your ability to take initiative and work independently.
Collaboration and Teamwork	
Tell me about your team experience.	Give me an example of a time when you made a valuable contribution to a team.
Leadership	
In what ways do you make a good leader? In what ways do you not make a good leader?	Tell me about a time when you demonstrated especially effective leadership skills. What skills did you demonstrate and what were the circumstances?
Openness to Change	
Do you find change to be difficult?	Tell me about a time when you felt challenged by a major change.
Willingness to Embrace Tools that Enhance Efficiency and Effectiveness	
What do you think is more important - efficiency or quality? Why?	Give an example of when you have used technology to increase efficiency in your own work, or for a group.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Questions

Bentley University endeavors to attract a strong diverse candidate pool from which to draw the best qualified candidate for each position. The following guidelines are intended to assist in developing interview questions that do not intentionally or unintentionally violate the law and provide an equal opportunity for consideration all qualified candidates.

SUBJECT	MAY NOT ASK	MAY ASK
NAME	Whether candidate has worked under a different name or any other questions that divulge marital status, ancestry, or national origin.	Current legal name and whether any information is necessary about applicant's name to check on previous work or educational record.
MARITAL STATUS	Whether person is married, single, separated, divorced, widowed, or engaged.	Nothing.
FAMILY STATUS	About family planning, number and ages of children, childcare arrangements, spouse's employment, travel schedule, whether applicant is "head of household."	About willingness to travel if job requires it and ability to meet work schedule requirements.
AGE	About applicants' age or date of birth. May not ask applicant to provide proof of age or date of graduation. (This information can be obtained **after** hire.)	Whether applicant meets the minimum age requirement as set by law.
RACE, COLOR, OR ETHNICITY	Applicant's race, color, or ethnicity. *Note: As permitted by law, the online employment application elicits this information for purposes of Bentley's affirmative action efforts. HR will report aggregate data to the hiring manager in order for him/her to monitor the diversity of the pool.*	Nothing.
PREGNANCY	About medical history concerning pregnancy and related health matters. Do not reject applicants because of pregnancy.	About anticipated duration in the job and anticipated absences from the job. (Same questions must be asked of males and females.)
PHYSICAL/MENTAL DISABILITIES	General questions about whether person is disabled or the severity or nature of the	Whether applicant is able to carry out all necessary job requirements in a safe

	disability: questions soliciting information that is not job related.	manner. Employer is required to make "reasonable accommodations" for physical and mental limitations of employees including alteration of duties and physical setting and provision of aids.
ADDRESS	About foreign addresses in a manner that tends to elicit national origin information; about names or relationships of persons with whom applicant resides; nor about whether applicant rents or owns a home.	Applicant's address
BIRTHPLACE/ NATIONAL ORIGIN	Ancestry/birth place of applicant or spouse, parents, or other relatives.	Nothing.
RELIGION	About religious denomination, affiliation, religious holidays observed.	About anticipated absences from job. Reasonable accommodation must be made for the religious observances of employees.
EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE	About education or experience not related to job performance. About the nationality, racial affiliation, or religious affiliation of a school attended.	Training and experience related to job requirements, including names and addresses of previous employers, dates of employment, reasons for leaving, and schools attended.
ARRESTS	About arrests.	Nothing.
CONVICTIONS	About convictions.	About felony convictions, if all candidates are asked, and if the information has a bearing on job performance of the specific positions. NOTE: The online employment application elicits this information using language permitted by state and federal law. Interviewers should not ask about convictions.
CREDIT RATINGS OR GARNISHMENTS	About credit ratings, financial status, car or home ownership	Nothing. If a credit report would be relevant to the position, the HR Recruiter

		will work with the candidate to obtain necessary information.
RELATIVES	About names or addresses of any relative of adult applicant.	Nothing.
EMERGENCY CONTACT	About whom to contact in case of an emergency.	This question is asked by HR as permitted by law **after hire.**
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	About sexual orientation or identity.	Nothing.
REFERENCES	For a listing of references unless they will be checked.	Request references if they will be contacted for employment suitability.
ORGANIZATIONS	About any organization to which the person belongs; particularly organizations that tend to indicate race, color, ethnicity, creed, sex, sexual orientation or identity, marital status, religion, or national origin.	About professional and job-related organizations, provided no negative hiring decisions result if the applicant chooses to exclude the name or nature of an organization that would tend to reveal race, ethnicity, religion, color, or ancestry.
SALARY	For current salary or salary history **before** an offer that includes salary is made.	Ask about salary only **after** an offer which includes salary is made.